LAWNMOWERS

PS YARD TOOLS

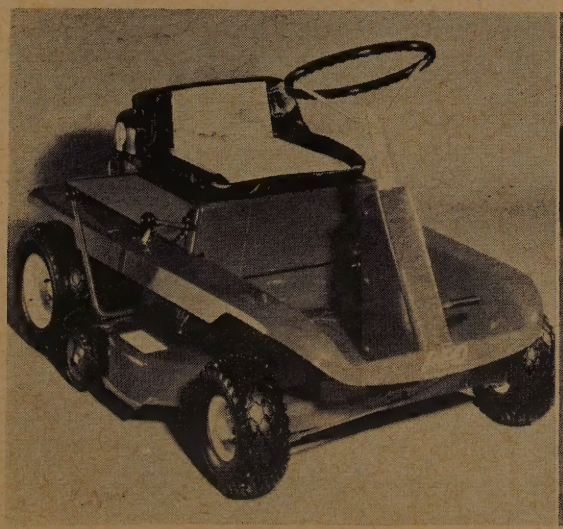
Shopping for

STYLING IS THE KEYNOTE IN '65 MODELS

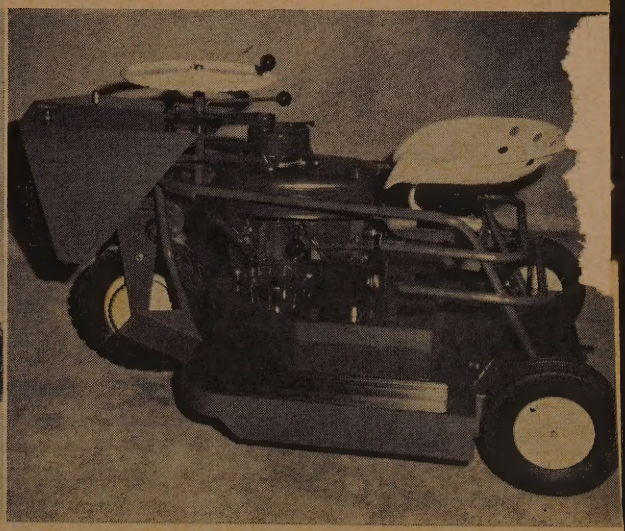
Some look like baby tractors (Homelite) . . .

Here a reel rides in back (Pennsylvania) . . .

Many cutters have separate wheels (Reo) . . .



There's even a three-wheeler (Swisher) . . .



It really cuts grass!

PS YARD TOOLS

That New Flying Lawn Mower

By Jackson Hand

CHANCES are, you've already heard about a new "flying lawn mower." If you haven't yet seen it, you eventually will. The first time I did, I was skeptical. A lawn mower without wheels? Crazy! But that's exactly what Toro's new Flymo lacks—wheels.

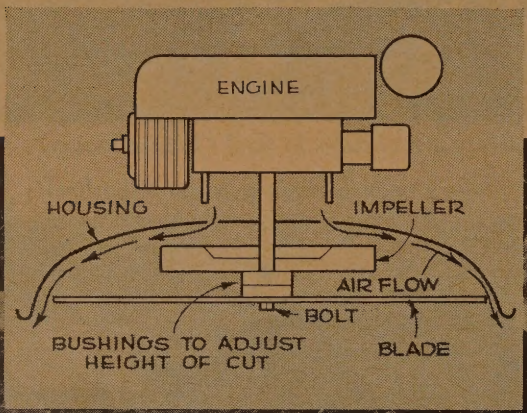
Nevertheless, it does what every lawn mower should do. It cuts grass. You might think it would scuff the turf, perhaps scalp high spots. It doesn't.

While it mows, it floats around the lawn like some kind of space-age bubble with a gasoline engine bolted on top. Mounted on the shaft, just above the cutter blade, is a semi-rigid plastic impeller 11 inches in diameter. With the 2½-hp. Tecumseh engine governed at 3,500 r.p.m., this big impeller sucks in air through four holes in the fiberglass housing, up under the motor. This puts pressure, a cushion of air, under the dome-shaped housing. What happens? The same thing that happens to the big commercial and military hovercraft. The difference in air pressure provides lift. The machine doesn't touch the ground.

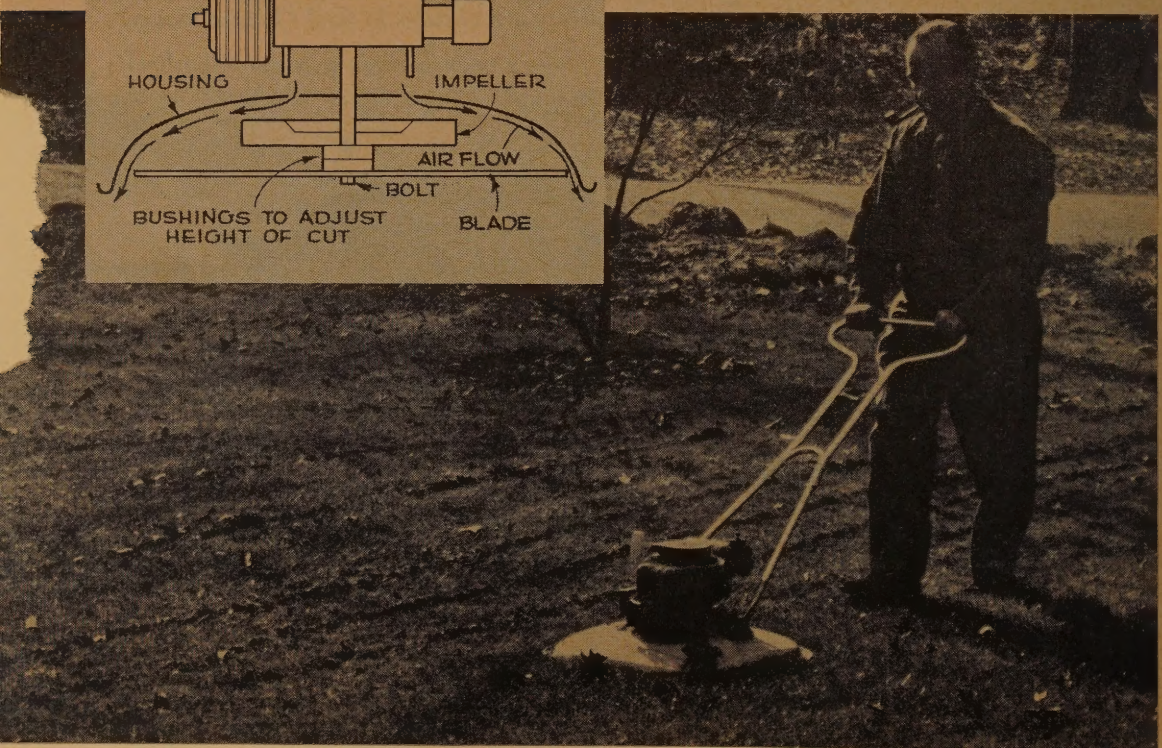
As a result, the Flymo is just as happy moving from side to side as it is moving forward and backward. The merit of this feature is one you discover quickly. Exert a little lateral pressure on the handle, and the mower floats sidewise. You move into tight quarters around trees or shrubs. A little push-pull-twist, and you float the mower around until it has mowed all the hard-to-hit spots. This is the major advantage of the new machine. Nothing that I have ever cut grass with is as easy to put into tight spots or to work around obstructions.

This every-which-way feature of the machine causes the first thing you won't like

[*Continued on page 186*]



Air cushion built up by a rapidly revolving impeller lifts Toro's 30-pound Flymo off the ground. You then float it across the lawn, cutting a 19" swath as you go. It has no wheels.



a Riding Mower

By Sheldon M. Gallager

THE riding mower is one of the hottest-selling pieces of yard equipment to come down the pike. Its sales for last year: a whopping 10-percent boost over the previous year against only five percent for other types of mowers and yard machines.

This year, riding mowers are expected to cut an even bigger swath. How come? Aside from the obvious luxury of being able to sit while you work, the riding mower is the logical next step in upgrading a hand-guided power mower. It's a single-purpose machine designed to do one job especially well. Many experts agree that it probably does a better mowing job than even a tractor with a mowing attachment. At the same time, it costs considerably less than a tractor but affords the same kind of fun.

A mower or a tractor? So many of today's riding mowers are styled to look like suburban tractors that it's sometimes hard to tell just what you're getting. Don't expect a mower to do a tractor's job. And don't think you're getting a tractor just because the maker offers a cart or dozer blade as accessories.

Most experts agree that a tractor, to do useful work, should have a minimum of six hp. and preferably eight or nine. Not many riding mowers are in this class. If you're going to saddle a mower with extra tasks, be sure it has the power to do them—and expect to pay a top price. If what you really want is an all-around yard machine, you'll be better off investing in a true tractor.

Size and weight. Within reasonable limits, the heavier the machine, the better its traction—provided it has adequate power. Even a modestly powered machine may not get the full benefit of its power if it's too light, simply because its wheels will slip before full power can be applied.

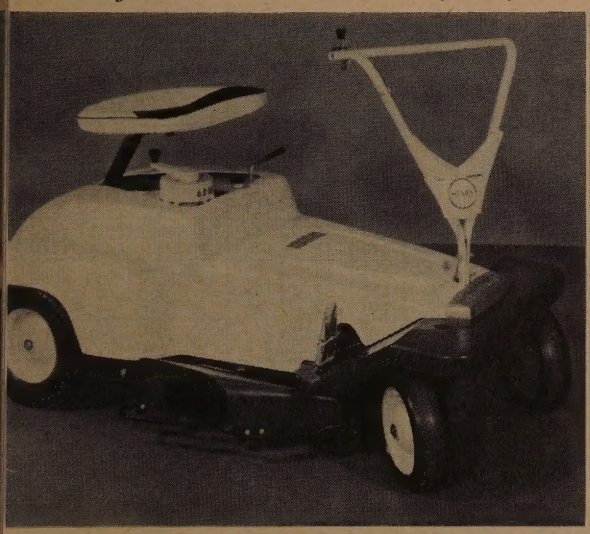
Ponder the "weight" column, in the chart on the next two pages, carefully.

The type of lot you have also affects the size of mower you choose. The larger a machine is, especially in width, the more stable it will be on hilly ground. A narrow machine can be tippy on a slope.

Look for big wheels. Large, fat-tired wheels roll more easily over rough turf than small ones and dig in less on soft ground. The driving wheels, especially, must be big for good traction. Other things being equal, pneumatic tires give better traction and riding comfort than semipneumatics or

[*Continued on page 218*]

Many have streamlined bodies (Sears) . . . And some look like sports cars (Moto-Mower).



For complete buyer's guide, see next two pages

Facts and Figures on

MAKE AND MODEL		APPROXIMATE PRICE	TYPE OF CUTTER	WIDTH OF CUT (in.)	BODY DIMENSIONS (inches) LENGTH	BODY DIMENSIONS (inches) WIDTH	APPROXIMATE WEIGHT (pounds)	HEIGHT OF CUT (inches) MAX.	HEIGHT OF CUT (inches) MIN.	CLOSENESS OF CUT (inches) AT FRONT	CLOSENESS OF CUT (inches) AT SIDE	TYPE OF CUTTER SHAFT BEARING	HAS BRAKES
A.M.F. WESTERN TOOL	HOMKO 1238	$280	rotary	24	48	25	228	3½	1 3/16	9½	⅜	ball	yes
	HOMKO 12660300	$450	rotary	30	61	34	328	4	1½	11½	½	roller	yes
ATLAS	ATLAS AIRE R25A	$270	rotary	24	54	29	224	3½	2	15	1	ball	yes
BLACK, SIVALLS & BRYSON (TURFRIDER)	OLYMPIC	$130	rotary	24	45	29	125	3	1½	10	½	ball	yes
	MONTERREY	$210	rotary	24	48	33	201	3¼	1¾	11	3	ball	yes
	PINEHURST	$250	rotary	24	48	33	206	3¼	1¾	11	3	ball	yes
	GREENBRIAR	$325	rotary	24	48	33	231	3¼	1¾	11	3	ball	yes
BOLENS	SUBURBAN 24	$220	rotary	24	41	25	185	2½	1½	9	½	needle	no
	SUBURBAN 26	$350	rotary	26	45	27	285	3	1½	11	½	sleeve	no
GALE	LAWN BOY 9275	$275	rotary	21	84	27	304	3½	1½	2	1	needle	no
	LAWN BOY 9245	$295	rotary	24	84	27	306	3½	1½	2	1	needle	no
GILSON	967	$240	rotary	25	49½	27	248	3	1½	12	1½	ball	yes
	966	$260	rotary	25	49½	27	250	3½	1½	12	1½	ball	yes
	965	$300	rotary	25	49½	27	260	3½	1½	12	1½	ball	yes
HOMELITE	YARD TRAC YTD-5	$400	rotary	26	51¼	27½	268	3½	1½	10¼	½	ball	yes
HUFFMAN	DIAMOND 4442	$130	rotary	24	43	27½	134	2¾	2	8	1	sleeve	no
	DIAMOND 4443	$170	rotary	24	43	27½	148	3	2¾	8½	1	sleeve	no
	BROADLAWN 4455	$300	rotary	25	48½	29¼	200	3½	1¾	10	1	sleeve	yes
JACOBSEN	JAVELIN	$450	rotary	26	40	28	n.s.	3½	1½	10	¾	roller	no
LAWNMASTER	301	$150	rotary	24	48	26	153	3	1	8¾	⅝	sleeve	yes
	306	$200	rotary	24	48	26	180	3	1½	9½	⅝	sleeve	yes
LOCKE	DEVERE-LOCKE 32R	$715	rotary	32	60	36	605	4	1	15	1	ball	no
MASSEY-FERGUSON	MF24 STANDARD	$210	rotary	24	48	26	164	3	1	9	½	sleeve	yes
	MF24 DELUXE	$290	rotary	24	48	26	210	3	1	9	½	sleeve	yes
McDONOUGH	SNAPPER COMET 304R	$370	rotary	30	59	34	310	4	1	10	½	ball	yes
	SNAPPER COMET 306RD	$420	rotary	30	59	34	322	4	1	10	½	ball	yes
MONTGOMERY WARD	GARDEN MART 41	$ 95	rotary	24	46	26	143	2¾	1¾	8	½	needle	no
	GARDEN MART 43	$165	rotary	24	46	26	166	2½	1½	10	½	needle	no
	GARDEN MART 47	$210	rotary	24	46	26	181	2½	1½	10	½	needle	yes
MOTO-MOWER	302	$200	rotary	24	48	26	177	3	1	8¾	⅝	sleeve	yes
	306	$280	rotary	24	48	26	208	3	1	9½	⅝	sleeve	yes
	305	$390	rotary	26	60	27	270	4	1½	18	½	needle	yes
MTD	LAWN FLITE 135-330	$140	rotary	24	45½	26½	148	2¾	1¾	14	½	ball	no
	LAWN FLITE 135-340	$180	rotary	24	45½	26½	175	3¼	1¾	14	½	ball	no
	LAWN FLITE 135-360	$215	rotary	24	45½	26½	185	3¼	1¾	14	½	ball	no
	LAWN FLITE 135-380	$275	rotary	24	50	27	235	3	1¾	14	½	ball	yes
J. C. PENNEY	PENNCRAFT 1415	$175	rotary	24	43	24	186	3	2	10	1	sleeve	no
	PENNCRAFT 1435	$240	rotary	25	47	24	195	3	1¾	10	1	sleeve	no
	PENNCRAFT 1445	$310	rotary	25	48	30	245	3	1¾	10	2	sleeve	yes
PENNSYLVANIA	4224-C	$225	reel	24	50	34	250	2	¾	40	5	roller	yes
	88-1	$400	rotary	30	57	33	380	3½	1½	15	1½	ball	yes
	88-2	$400	reel	30	57	35	375	2½	1	16	2, 3	roller	yes
QUICK	SPRINGFIELD LT425	$260	rotary	25	48	26	201	3	1½	10	½	ball	yes
	SPRINGFIELD LT525	$380	rotary	25	46	26	249	3½	1½	10	½	ball	yes
RUGG	5015	$100	rotary	24	47	27	132	2½	1½	10	½	needle	yes
	5025	$160	rotary	24	47	27	170	3	1¾	10	½	needle	yes
	5035	$190	rotary	25	47	27	181	3	1¾	10	½	needle	yes
	5045	$200	rotary	25	47	27	195	3⅛	1¾	10	½	needle	yes
	5065	$300	rotary	26	49	28	245	3½	1¾	12	1½	needle	yes
SEARS, ROEBUCK	CRAFTSMAN 807	$150	rotary	24	48	27	145	3¼	1¾	10	½	ball and needle	yes
	CRAFTSMAN 826	$270	rotary	26	55	31	210	3¼	1¾	12	⅜	ball and needle	yes
SIMPLICITY	WONDER BOY 400	$275	rotary	24	60½	27⅛	218	2⅝	1½	12	⅝	ball	no
	WONDER BOY SPECIAL	$350	rotary	32	62½	29½	270	3	1¼	12	⅝	ball	yes
	WONDER BOY SUPER	$370	rotary	32	62½	29½	275	3	1¼	12	⅝	ball	yes
SOUTHLAND	RR-245	$160	rotary	24	48	26	160	3	1	10	1	ball	no
	RR-255	$280	rotary	25	50	30	220	3	1	12	1	ball	yes
SWISHER	RIDE KING 32	$310	rotary	32	51	32½	210	3½	1¾	18	¼	ball	yes
TORO	BIG RED 25	$410	rotary	25	61½	25	266	3	1½	1	⅝	ball	yes
	BIG RED 34	$450	rotary	34	61½	40	272	3	1½	2¾	⅝	ball	yes
WESTERN AUTO	WIZARD 3542	$125	rotary	24	45½	26½	148	2¾	1¾	10½	1	n.s.	no
	WIZARD 3544	$165	rotary	24	45½	26½	179	3½	1	12	1	ball	no
	WIZARD 3545	$205	rotary	25	47	30½	215	2¾	1¾	12	½	ball	yes
	WIZARD 3552	$245	rotary	25	50	27	220	3	1½	12	1	ball	yes
	WIZARD 3555	$295	rotary	25	47¼	30½	235	3½	1	12	½	ball	yes
	WIZARD 3558	$350	rotary	25	46	28	249	3½	1½	8	¾	ball	yes
WHEEL HORSE	REO 65R	$400	rotary	32	56	33½	245	3⅜	1⅛	18	¾	ball and needle	yes

n.s.—Not specified.

1965 Riding Mowers

MAKE OF ENGINE	HORSEPOWER (hp./r.p.m.)	TYPE OF MAINSHAFT BEARING	TYPE OF DRIVE TO WHEELS	TYPE OF CLUTCH	TYPE OF DIFFERENTIAL	NUMBER OF SPEEDS		TIRE DIAMETER (inches)		TYPE OF STEERING
						FORWARD	REVERSE	FRONT	REAR	
Briggs and Stratton	4/3,600	sleeve	chain	n.s.	automotive	2	2	8	10	handlebars
Briggs and Stratton	6/3,600	sleeve	chain	n.s.	automotive	4	1	11	16	handlebars
Briggs and Stratton	4/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	automotive	2	2	10	12	tiller
Briggs and Stratton	3/3,600	sleeve	chain	none	none	1	1	8	10	tiller
Briggs and Stratton	4/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	none	1	1	10	12	full wheel
Briggs and Stratton	4/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	automotive	1	1	10	12	full wheel
Tecumseh	6/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	automotive	2	2	10	13	full wheel
Briggs and Stratton	4/3,600	sleeve	gear	belt idler	automotive	variable	variable	8	10	handlebars
Briggs and Stratton	5/3,600	sleeve	gear	belt idler	automotive	variable	variable	10	12	handlebars
Lawn Boy	3½/2,500	needles	gear	disk	gear	3	1	8	10	tiller
Lawn Boy	3½/2,500	needles	gear	disk	gear	3	1	8	10	tiller
Briggs and Stratton	4/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	automotive	1	1	10	12	tiller
Briggs and Stratton	4/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	automotive	1	1	10	12	tiller
Lauson	5/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	automotive	1	1	10	12	half wheel
Lauson	5/3,600	sleeve	chain	disk	belt	4	1	10	16	tiller
Briggs and Stratton	3/2,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	none	1	1	8	10	handlebars
Briggs and Stratton	4/3,200	sleeve	chain	belt idler	none	1	1	8	10	full wheel
Briggs and Stratton	5/3,200	sleeve	chain	belt idler	automotive	3	1	11	15	full wheel
Tecumseh	6/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	belt	variable	1	12	13	handlebars
Briggs and Stratton	4/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	automotive	3	1	8	10	tiller
Briggs and Stratton	4/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	automotive	3	1	10	10	full wheel
Wisconsin	9/3,000	roller	chain	disk	automotive	variable	1	14	15	handlebars
Briggs and Stratton	4/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	automotive	1	1	8	10	tiller
Briggs and Stratton	4/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	automotive	3	2	10	10	full wheel
Briggs and Stratton	4/3,600	sleeve	gear	disk	automotive	5	1	10	17	full wheel
Briggs and Stratton	6/3,600	sleeve	gear	disk	automotive	5	1	12	17	full wheel
Powr-Kraft	3/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	none	variable	1	8	10	tiller
Powr-Kraft	4/3,600	sleeve	chain	sliding jaw	none	variable	1	8	10	handlebars
Powr-Kraft	4/3,600	sleeve	chain	sliding jaw	automotive	variable	1	8	10	handlebars
Briggs and Stratton	4/3,600	sleeve	gear	belt idler	none	1	1	8	10	tiller
Briggs and Stratton	4/3,600	sleeve	gear	belt idler	automotive	3	1	8	10	full wheel
Tecumseh	5/3,600	sleeve	gear	disk	automotive	3	1	10	10	half wheel
Briggs and Stratton	4/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	automotive	1	1	8¼	10¼	tiller
Briggs and Stratton	4/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	automotive	1	1	8¼	10¼	tiller
Briggs and Stratton	4/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	automotive	1	1	10¼	12½	tiller
Briggs and Stratton	4/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	automotive	2	2	10¼	12½	tiller
Briggs and Stratton	4/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	none	1	1	8	10¼	tiller
Briggs and Stratton	4/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	automotive	3	1	10	12	full wheel
Tecumseh	6/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	automotive	3	1	10	14	full wheel
Briggs and Stratton	3/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	ratchet	1	none	8¼	11	tiller
Briggs and Stratton	6/3,600	sleeve	disk	disk	automotive	variable	1	12	16	half wheel
Briggs and Stratton	6/3,600	sleeve	disk	disk	automotive	variable	1	12	16	half wheel
Briggs and Stratton	4/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	automotive	variable	variable	10	12	full wheel
Tecumseh	5/3,600	sleeve	gear	belt idler	automotive	3	1	10	12	full wheel
Clinton	3½/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	none	1	1	8	10	tiller
Briggs and Stratton	4/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	automotive	1	1	10	12	half wheel
Briggs and Stratton	4/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	automotive	1	1	10	12	half wheel
Briggs and Stratton	4/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	automotive	3	1	10	12	full wheel
Briggs and Stratton	6/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	automotive	3	1	10	14	full wheel
Craftsman	3½/3,350	sleeve	chain	belt idler	none	variable	variable	8¼	9	tiller
Craftsman	6/3,400	sleeve	chain	belt idler	automotive	variable	variable	10¼	16½	tiller
Briggs and Stratton	4/3,600	sleeve	gear	belt idler	automotive	2	2	8	14	half wheel
Briggs and Stratton	6/3,600	sleeve	gear	belt idler	automotive	2	1	8	16	half wheel
Briggs and Stratton	6/3,600	sleeve	gear	belt idler	automotive	2	1	11	21	half wheel
Clinton	3½/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	automotive	1	1	8	10	tiller
Briggs and Stratton	5/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	automotive	2	2	10	12	full wheel
Lauson	6/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	none	1	1	13	10	full wheel
Tecumseh	6/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	automotive	4	1	12	16	half wheel
Tecumseh	6/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	automotive	4	1	12	16	half wheel
Briggs and Stratton	3/3,400	sleeve	chain	belt idler	none	1	1	8¼	10¼	tiller
Briggs and Stratton	4/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	none	1	1	8¼	10¼	tiller
Briggs and Stratton	4/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	none	1	1	10	12	tiller
Briggs and Stratton	4/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	automotive	2	1	10¼	12	tiller
Tecumseh	5/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	automotive	2	1	10	13	half wheel
Tecumseh	5/3,600	sleeve	chain	belt idler	automotive	3	1	10	12	half wheel
Lauson	6/3,600	sleeve	gear	belt idler	automotive	2	2	10	12	full wheel

Gus Meets

He loosened and lifted off the enormous air filter, and the engine settled to a smooth idle.

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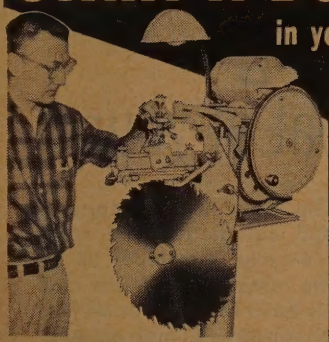

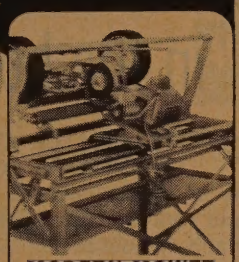

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Shopping for a Riding Mower

[*Continued from page 173*]

solid tires. A short turning radius is another tipoff to good maneuverability.

Width of cut. This varies from a minimum of about 24″ to a maximum of about 34″. Your choice depends mostly on how much you're willing to pay. Obviously, the wider the cut, the fewer the passes you have to make to cover the same ground.

But cost goes up sharply as cutting width increases. Even a few inches can make a difference of $100 or more in the price of a machine. There's also something to be said for the greater maneuverability that a narrow blade gives you around obstructions.

What is more important is the closeness of cut at the front and sides. This tells you how close you can cut to a wall, fence, or tree. The closer the cut, the less hand trimming you'll have to fuss with.

How is the cutter mounted? Cutters that are bolted rigidly to the frame of the mower follow the mower, not the ground. On uneven ground, the mower's wheels can bridge humps or gullies, causing the blade to scalp or skip in spots. In many riding mowers, the cutter housing rides on its own wheels or is flexibly suspended so that it follows the contours of the ground more closely.

All mowers have a means of raising and lowering the blade to vary cutting height, but this is done more easily in some than in others. On some machines, you can vary cutting height without even stopping. Others require the more or less permanent insertion of shaft spacers to establish blade height.

The engine. Most engines are of four-cycle design and are made by nationally known engine manufacturers. How much power you buy depends partly on your lot and partly on your personal taste. A three-hp. machine *will* cut grass, but not as efficiently, or as quickly, or as smoothly—or as glamorously—as a six-hp. machine. If you have a small, level lot, an economy model can be a good buy. But if you need hill-climbing power and go-anywhere ruggedness, better think bigger.

The drive. Most riding mowers use rear-wheel drive with the engine also in the rear. This puts both the engine and driver over the wheels for good traction. But you'll find other combinations, too. A few machines have the drive in the rear but the engine

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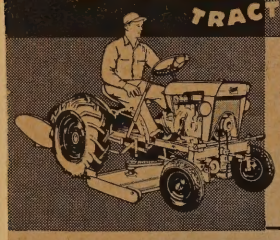

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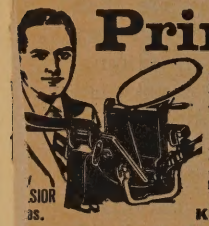

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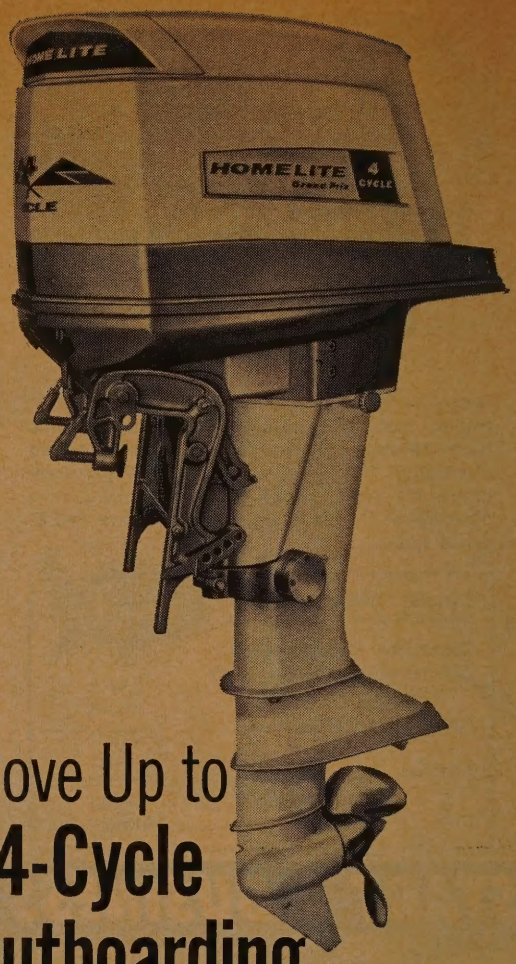

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up front, and a couple have both engine and drive in the front.

Most makers agree on the use of a V-belt drive to the mower blades, but differ widely on the drive to the wheels. Some use chains only, arguing positive power delivery, while others use a combination of belts and chains. In some of the fancier machines, the wheels are powered by gears through a differential, as in a car. Chains and gears are desirable in heavy, high-powered machines where ruggedness is a must, but belts are economical and are adequate for small, lightweight models.

All but the cheapest machines have some kind of differential to let the driving wheels rotate independently so they can make smooth, tight turns without tearing up the lawn. In some machines, the differential can be locked against slippage when you want maximum power on both wheels. In a few models, the driving wheels can be disengaged completely by removing pins. This allows them to free-wheel so you can push the machine easily by hand.

How many speeds? A multispeed transmission gives you better control on slopes and around obstructions, but a lot of speeds may not be absolutely necessary. On a bare, level lot, you may be paying largely for the luxury of shifting speeds just for the fun of it.

One feature that is not a luxury, however, is a reverse speed. It's important to be able to back out of a narrow place—your garage, for example—where there's no room to turn around.

How about brakes? You'll get brakes on better machines, but not on economy models. Where brakes are specified, find out what kind. Some machines provide only a parking brake, while others have running brakes that go on automatically.

Other points to check on are seat comfort and steering ease. Most of today's mowers have stylishly upholstered seats, but you should try them yourself. The old-fashioned farm hay-rake seat shaped to fit your fanny is still likely to be more comfortable—even in bare steel—than one that's merely a thinly padded flat board.

You'll find a variety of steering styles to choose from: the simple tiller bar, handlebars, automotive-style round wheels, and aircraft-type half-round and oval wheels. Watch out for wheels that are too small to give good leverage. ■ ■

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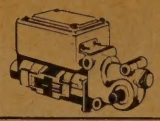

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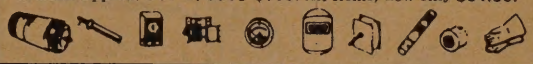

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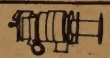

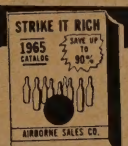

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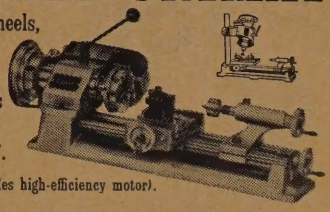

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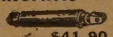

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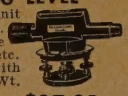

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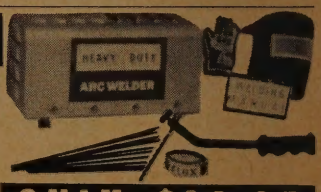

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